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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H

James C. Sleight
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

S E N I O R P U B L I C H E A L T H I N S P E C T O R

John Snowdon
M.A.P.H.I.

F O R T H E Y E A R 1 9 5 8 .



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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

James C. Sleight
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

John Snowdon
M.A.P.H.I.

FOR THE YEAR 1958.

HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1958

Chairman: Mrs. C. West, J.P.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. F.M. Drake

Mrs. K.F.M. Crawley	Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.
Mr. E. Ackroyd	Mr. R.S. Hammett
Mr. K.H. Bond	Mr. H.A.F. Malden
Mr. A. Clark	Mr. C.F. Putterill, C.A.
Mr. C.W. Curl	Mr. V.E. Truss
Mr. L.W. Edgell	Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.
Mr. L.T. Fowler	

Public Health Committee

Chairman: Mr. L.T. Fowler

Mrs. K.F.M. Crawley	Mr. F.M. Drake
Mr. K.H. Bond	Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.
Mr. A. Clark	Mr. R.S. Hammett
Mr. C.W. Curl	Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.

URBAN DISTRICT OF HARPENDEN.

To the Chairman and Councillors of the
Harpenden Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report on the health of
Harpenden for the year 1958.

The general health of the district remained good and the
year was remarkably free from infectious diseases. It is
particularly pleasing to be able to report no cases of poliomyelitis.

To you Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to
record my sincere thanks for all consideration and help you have
at all times shown me, and to my staff I wish to record my sincere
thanks for their effort and conscientious performance of their
duties.

I am also deeply indebted to the Chief Clerk and
Secretary in the Divisional Health Office for their assistance
in the preparation of the statistics for this report and for the
many extra duties carried out by them during the year, which were
actually outside their Divisional Health Office duties.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J.C. SLEIGH,

Medical Officer of Health.

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SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	3,157
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	..				16,500
Number of inhabited houses on the Rate Books:					
Inhabited dwelling-houses (including flats and huts but excluding caravans)	..			..	5,576
Shops with living accommodation	..			..	68
Licensed premises with living accommodation				..	23
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	£288,173
Sum represented by a penny rate (estimated)	..			..	£1,150

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births - Legitimate	..	158	149	307
Illegitimate	..	4	3	7
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	..	..	..	19.03
Still Births	..	-	4	4
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 total live and still births) ..		..	..	12.58
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 of estimated population)	..	..	..	0.24
Deaths	..	79	96	175
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	..	..	..	10.61

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		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths from Pregnancy, Childbirth, or Abortion:		-	1	1
Rate per 1,000 (total live and stillbirths)		..	..	3.14
Deaths of Infants under 1 Year:				
Legitimate	..	3	5	8
Illegitimate	..	-	-	-
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age (all infants per 1,000 live births):	..	..	..	25.48
Neonatal Death Rate:	..	..	..	22.29

BIRTHS: The number of births during
1958 was 314.

DEATHS: There were 175 deaths.

The Infant Mortality rate is again higher than last year. The actual number of deaths was 8 - 4 were under 1 week old and the oldest 6 months. Stillbirths on the other hand were down from 11 to 4. Now the causes of prematurity, congenital defects, and stillbirths are similar. The stillbirth ratio should and usually does vary inversely with the infant mortality rate.

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CAUSES OF DEATH

<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory ..	1	-
2.	Tuberculosis, other ..	-	-
3.	Syphilitic Diseases ..	-	-
4.	Diphtheria ..	-	-
5.	Whooping Cough ..	-	-
6.	Meningococcal infections ..	-	-
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis ..	-	-
8.	Measles ..	-	-
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases ..	-	-
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach ..	1	1)
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus ..	12	2)
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast ..	-	4)
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus ..	-	2)
14.	Other lymphatic and malignant Neoplasms ..	7	10)
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia ..	1	-)
16.	Diabetes ..	1	-
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system ..	11	22
18.	Coronary disease, angina ..	7	12)
19.	Hypertension ..	1	3)
20.	Other heart disease ..	16	18)
21.	Other circulatory diseases ..	4	5
22.	Influenza ..	1	-
23.	Pneumonia ..	2	3
24.	Bronchitis ..	4	4
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system ..	1	1
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ..	-	-
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ..	-	2
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis ..	-	-
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate ..	-	-
C/fwd ..		70	89

40 Cancer.

57 Heart Disease

<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
	B/fwd ..	70	89
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ..	-	1
31.	Congenital malformations ..	-	-
32.	Other defined and ill- defined diseases ..	2	4
33.	Motor vehicle accidents ..	4	1
34.	All other accidents ..	-	1
35.	Suicide ..	3	-
36.	Homicide and operations of war ..	-	-
		—	—
	Totals ..	79	96
		--	--

Cancer Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 2.36

Heart Disease
Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 3.45

It can safely be said that the majority of cases under the heading "Heart Disease" could be more accurately described as death from old age.

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SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Welfare Centres and Clinics.

The County Council Child Welfare Clinics are now held at No. 40 Luton Road on the first and third Wednesday afternoons of each month and at Batford J.M.I. School on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons.

The Ophthalmic and Dental clinics are at 40 Luton Road by appointment.

This arrangement is working very well. At Batford we are deeply indebted to the Headmaster, Mr. Bridges, for his enthusiastic co-operation.

National Health Service Act.

The Divisional Administration of the health services administered by the Local Health Authority, the County Council, continues to work very smoothly and an increasing amount of detailed administration is being passed out to Divisional Health Offices from Hertford.

The records available in the Divisional Health Office on Local Health Authority work are of the greatest value to me in my local Sanitary Authority (Medical Officer of Health) work, especially in what is my most difficult job, assessing medical points for housing applications.

Ambulance Service.

I am omitting figures for the ambulance service as applied to Harpenden. The service is running at full strength and whether a case is served from Harpenden or St. Albans depends on circumstances such as urgency, availability of ambulances or sitting cars.

Hospitals.

The Harpenden Memorial Hospital forms part of the Luton and Hitchin Group administered by the Management Committee under the North-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. Four House Committees have been appointed by the Management Committee, one of which is concerned with this Hospital and for this purpose the Hospital is linked with Welwyn and Stevenage.

Statistics.

Year ended December 1958.

<u>Bed complement:</u>	Surgical and Medical	..	22	
	Maternity	..	<u>12</u>	34
<u>Average daily number of occupied beds</u>		..		78
<u>Admissions</u>	..	..	..	687
<u>Discharges</u>	..	..	..	675
<u>Number of Births:</u>	Live	..	..	328
	Still	..	..	6
	Deaths	..	..	2

Out-patient Departments:

<u>Physiotherapy Dept.</u>	<u>New Patients.</u>	<u>Attendances.</u>
In -patients	39	426
Out-patients	697	9,624
<u>Casualty Dept.</u>	669	741
<u>Specialist Consultations.</u>	403	537
<u>Out-patients treated by General Practitioners.</u>	87	108

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General Nutrition.

Poor nutrition is rare and usually is the result of fussing parents indulging food fads. Underweight children often are of small birth weight or have small parents.

I must emphasise that there is no fixed weight for age. Both weight and height vary within rather wide limits in completely healthy children.

Nursing in the Home.

The District Nursing Sisters are available for all cases of domiciliary nursing which includes Midwifery and General Nursing and in all cases where there is illness in the home where a request is made personally or at the request of the Doctor in attendance.

Home Help Service.

This service is administered by the Hertfordshire County Council and provides domestic help for households where such help is required owing to the presence of any person who is ill, lying-in, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged, or a child not over school age, within the meaning of the Education Act, 1944.

The Organiser, who is a member of the Divisional Health Department Staff, receives requests from doctors, health visitors, midwives, and hospital almoners. No one is denied help on financial grounds and every case can be assessed according to the family income.

The service is proving extremely popular, so much so, in fact, that we are unable to provide all the help that is desired because we cannot get sufficient numbers of Home Helps. This is particularly difficult in the period Christmas to Easter when, of

course, illness is at its height and one must remember that illness affects Home Helps as well as other members of the community.

Health Visiting.

There are two Health Visitors in the area. They are employed for the visiting of persons in their homes for the purpose of giving advice as to the care of young children, old persons suffering from illness, and expectant or nursing mothers, and as to the measures necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

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SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.

The Public Water Supply is provided by the Harpenden Water Company from boreholes at Shakespeare Road and East Hyde, both fairly near the River Lee which is well known to be highly polluted with sewage. The water is, therefore, chlorinated, a very necessary precaution. I am glad to say that we have received considerably fewer complaints in regard to taste than in previous years.

Sewage Disposal:

I am indebted to Mr. H. Pettingale, the Council's Engineer and Surveyor for the following details:

The total quantity of sewage treated at the Sewage Works was 241,102,100 gallons compared with 227,133,000 gallons in 1957.

The rainfall was 32.18 inches compared with 21.99 inches in 1957.

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SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Re-housing.

This is still the greatest problem confronting the Council. The points scheme is in use and in addition all certificates from medical practitioners requesting priority for any of their patients are submitted to me as Medical Officer of Health. I have the power to recommend additional points on medical grounds without disclosing my reasons for doing so. In extreme cases I also have the power of recommending absolute priority but this power I am very unwilling to use as, of course, if this power were abused it would ruin the whole points scheme with which I am completely in favour.

The duty thus imposed on me is a very difficult one and I have no doubt that on occasions I shall make mistakes but I can assure the Council that I shall do my utmost to make their housing scheme work as fairly as humanly possible, bearing in mind the very large and urgent demand for houses.

Points are allotted independently of me for such conditions as overcrowding. I therefore never give points for conditions which already attract points under the Housing points scheme.

Number of new houses and flats erected during
the year:

(a)	By the Local Authority	..	24
(b)	By private enterprise	..	266
			290

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1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:

(i)	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	..	..	..	166
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	..	310
(ii)	(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations 1925	..	..	..	6
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	..	10
(iii)		Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation			..	2
(iv)		Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	..	..	..	-

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notice:

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	..	..	51
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during this year:

A. Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	..	..	-
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses rendered fit after service of Formal Notices:	..	..	-
(a)	By Owners	..	..	-
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners	..	..	-

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which informal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	..	..	49
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of Formal Notices:			
(a)	By Owners	..	..	-
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners	..	..	-

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SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food Poisoning Outbreaks - Nil.

One isolated case of Staphylococcal Enteritis.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1958.

<u>Disease.</u>		<u>Total Cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever	..	-	-
Whooping Cough	..	1	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	..	-	-
Measles	..	26	-
Diphtheria	..	-	-
Pneumonia	..	-	-
Dysentery	..	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	..	-	-
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	..	-	-
Erysipelas	..	2	-
Meningococcal Infection	..	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	..	1	-
Malaria	..	-	-
Undulant Fever	..	-	-
Cerebro Spinal Fever	..	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	..	-	-
Food Poisoning	..	1	-
Gastro Enteritis	..	-	-
Pneumococcal Meningitis	..	-	-

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Smallpox.

There were no cases during 1958.

Vaccination.

Number of Persons vaccinated (or re-vaccinated) during 1958.

<u>Age at 31st December:</u>	<u>Under 1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>5-15</u>	<u>15 or over</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number vaccinated	234	10	5	5	15	269
Number re-vaccinated	-	-	4	6	32	42

Number of cases specially reported during period (age groups as above)

- Nil -

Number of births registered for Harpenden	..	314
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Primary vaccination rate per 100 births	..	85.7
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Of the total number of vaccinations (311), 33 were carried out at County Council clinics.

A primary vaccination rate of 85.7 per 100 births is very satisfactory indeed, being considerably higher than my past experience when vaccination was compulsory!

I would emphasise that the ideal age for primary vaccination is under one year of age, when the risk of complications is practically nil. Complications do occur when the primary vaccination is done later in life, but not when re-vaccination takes place at an older age. Vaccination is compulsory for many people who wish to travel abroad or take up certain employment, and it is well worth while having all babies vaccinated so that no risk may be run if they have to be vaccinated in adult life.

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Diphtheria Immunisation.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1958:

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
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320	14
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Total - 334

Number of children who were given a secondary or reinforcing injection (i.e. subsequent to complete Full Course):

Total - 273

Births for the same area	..	314
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Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births	..	106.4
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The numbers shown above include 302 children who received combined Whooping Cough/Diphtheria immunisation injections.

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Whooping Cough.

On the 16th March, 1953, the County Council scheme under Section 26 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, was extended to cover protection against Whooping Cough.

It is obviously wise to immunise children as soon as possible, because by far the greatest danger occurs in the first year.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1958.

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
326	4
Total ..	330
	==

Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births 105.1

These figures include 302 children who received a primary immunisation with a combined Whooping Cough/Diphtheria vaccine.

It will be noted that once again we have an immunisation rate both for Diphtheria and Whooping Cough of above 100%. It is emphasised that it is difficult to check that all the children who are immunised against Whooping Cough, Diphtheria, and Smallpox actually reside in Harpenden. You will appreciate that a Harpenden postal address by no means implies that the child actually resides within the Urban District boundary but I am sure the number of children in Harpenden who escape immunisation is very, very few.

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Programme of Protective Inoculations.

The following should be the routine procedure for young children:

Month of Age.

Before 3rd month (or at $4\frac{1}{2}$ months)	-	Smallpox	Vaccine	
3rd month	-	Pertussis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
4th month	-	Pertussis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
$4\frac{1}{2}$ months	-	Smallpox	Vaccine	
6th month	-	Poliomyelitis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
7th month	-	Poliomyelitis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
8th month	-	Diphtheria	Formol Toxoid	1 c.c.
9th month	-	Diphtheria	Formol Toxoid	1 c.c.
12th month	-	Pertussis	Vaccine	1 c.c.

Booster.

Diphtheria 1 c.c. Formol Toxoid or T.A.F. immediately before or after the child starts school.

Poliomyelitis Vaccine.

The only contra-indications considered to be valid at present are the same as those applying to the other types of immunising procedures, viz: acute or intercurrent illness, poor or indifferent general health, acute constitutional disturbances, etc. If a child is to have tonsils or adenoids removed and is also due for the vaccine, it should be given at least two weeks before the operation if possible in the hope that the child may develop some immunity.

B.C.G. Vaccine.

If this vaccine is to be, or has been, given to a young child contact, there should be no immunising injections of any kind for two weeks before or for six weeks afterwards.

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Poliomyelitis.

There were no cases of the disease during the year. Immunisation against the disease has been stepped up considerably. Supplies, especially of British, vaccine are coming through much better but unfortunately they are still very irregular and it is almost impossible to plan one's campaign more than a week or two in advance.

In October those eligible were increased to those born on 1st January 1933, or later, and it is hoped that the age groups will be still further extended. In my own, admittedly, rather small experience, I have found that the age group suffering from the most serious forms of the disease is 25 - 35 and I am hoping that the age limit will soon be extended to 35.

The Ministry still insist on prior registration before immunisation can be carried out, I feel this is very regrettable. Admittedly, to allow open sessions might be unfair to those who have registered but we are well up with actual immunisation of those registered. Especially in the teenage, up to age 26, we are finding that people are very unwilling to register for something in the uncertain future. We cannot give any undertaking, when they register, as to when they will be done as that obviously depends entirely on how supplies of vaccine come through. I feel that we have now reached the stage where open sessions could be held when persons wishing to be vaccinated could be done there and then as long as the supply lasts. I think they would understand that after a certain number have been done, and they are informed that we are sorry there is no more vaccine, they would have to wait.

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Tuberculosis.

Cases on Register as at 31st December, 1958.

<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>		<u>Totals</u>
<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
53 (45)	37 (33)	5 (4)	14 (12)	109 (94)

Figures as at 31st December 1957, are in brackets.

REPORT OF THE SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my sixth report on the work of the Public Health and Housing Department.

During the year regular visits were made to food premises in the area and although the standard of the shops generally is high the value of keeping in touch by routine visiting cannot be over-emphasised. Although the Council did not hesitate in taking legal proceedings where the circumstances warranted such action, there is still much to be achieved by mutual co-operation and intelligent interpretation of the various Acts and Regulations.

There is no doubt that everyone was very relieved to see the end of the temporary hutted encampment at Milford Estate. The last tenant was re-housed during October and in writing the obituary of this camp the fact that 188 families found temporary shelter there must never be forgotten. In recent years criticism was levelled at the Council for continuing the use of the camp but there are many families who have every reason to be very grateful to the Council for their foresight in the immediate post war years in providing this accommodation for which there was always a constant demand almost until the end of its life.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Chairmen and members of the Public Health and Housing Committees for the keen interest taken in the work of the Department and for their friendly and close support at all times.

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SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

General Sanitation.

Public Health Acts	-	primary inspections	..	227	
		re-inspections	..	298	
Drainage		..	..	139	
Infectious Diseases		..	..	2	
Disinfections		..	..	1	
Movable Dwellings		..	..	72	
Refuse Collection and Disposal		..	..	15	
Disinfestations		..	..	13	
Public Conveniences		..	..	5	
Smell Nuisances		..	..	37	
Keeping of Animals		..	..	30	
Rodent Control		..	..	2,172	+
Housing Acts		..	..	154	
Rent Acts		..	..	130	
Factories Acts		..	..	127	
Shops Acts		..	..	1	
Petroleum Regulations		..	..	67	
Pet Animals Act		..	..	5	
Miscellaneous Visits		..	..	51	
				<u>3,546</u>	

+ Includes 1,872 visits made by the
Council's Rodent Operative.

Food Hygiene.

General Stores and Grocers	..	..	69	
Cafes and Canteen	..	..	54	
Licensed Premises	..	..	23	
Bakers and Confectioners	..	..	20	
Greengrocers	..	..	11	
Butchers	..	..	42	
Fish Shops	..	..	3	
Dairies	..	..	11	
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	20	
Visits re sampling:				
Milk Distributors	..	..	35	
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	14	
			<u>302</u>	

GENERAL SANITATION.

Complaints.

During the year, 169 complaints were received and dealt with; 92 of these were regarding infestations by rats and mice.

Disinfection.

One property was disinfected after a case of infectious disease with a proprietary formaldehyde preparation.

Drainage.

A considerable amount of work was again carried out during the year in connection with the testing, alteration and repairs of existing drainage systems and 139 visits were made for the purpose. Following complaints of rat infestation, thorough checking of the drainage systems of all infested premises and those in the immediate vicinity was carried out.

The drainage systems of 290 new houses and flats constructed during the year were connected to the sewer.

Cesspools.

There were at the end of the year 56 cesspools in use and in most cases the houses concerned are in scattered small groups where connection to main drainage is not practicable at the present time. Although it may be possible in due course to connect some of the properties with cesspools to main drainage, the majority will remain out of reach of public sewers for some time.

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Cesspool Emptying Service.

The Council bear the cost of one emptying of a cesspool each year for premises that are not within reasonable distance of the Council's sewers. This work was undertaken by the St. Albans Rural District Council and I must record my thanks to Mr. D.J. Graham, Chief Public Health Inspector, for his co-operation and help at all times with this very essential service. During the year 46 emptyings were carried out.

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948.

The following table shows the number of registered factories within the district, the number of inspections, and details of defects:

<u>Premises.</u>	<u>Number on Register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>
Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Local Authority.	4	13
Factories not included above in which section 7 is enforced	55	63
Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	63	51
	122	127
	---	---

<u>Defects.</u>	<u>Number found.</u>	<u>Remedied.</u>
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7):		
(a) Insufficient	1	1
(b) Defective	2	2
	3	3
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Outworkers.

At the end of the year there were 17 persons on the register of outworkers employed mainly by firms outside the area. The persons concerned are all engaged on making or trimming hats or other wearing apparel.

Movable Dwellings.

During the year the use of caravans as a means of human habitation did not decline and 37 caravans were licensed under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, and in addition 9 caravans continued to be stationed on the Council's temporary site at Milford Estate.

32 of the licensed caravans are stationed on three sites where proper provision has been made for the disposal of elsan contents, refuse collection, mains water supply, and on two of the sites sanitary accommodation for both males and females. The remaining 5 caravans are on individual sites and adequate facilities are available. 72 visits were made during the year in connection with caravans. The use of caravans as temporary accommodation on properly regulated sites assists considerably in alleviating the housing shortage which still exists.

Notices.

The following notices were served during the year. Compliance with notices was effected without the necessity of instituting legal proceedings.

Informal Notices.

Notices served during year	..	49
Complied with by owners		
during year	..	51

Formal Notices.

Notices served during year	..	1
Complied with by owners		
during year	..	1

Rodent Control.

The extermination of rats and mice is carried out as a free service to the occupiers of private premises. A charge is made in respect of business premises at an hourly rate to cover the cost of labour, materials and administration.

92 complaints concerning infestations by rats and mice were received and dealt with, resulting in the treatment of 266 properties. For this purpose 2,172 visits were made and 226 dead rats were found.

The Council employ one Rodent Operative (Mr. E.A.C. Faram) for this work.

Sewers:

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, a ten per cent test of sewer manholes and two treatments of infested sewers were carried out during the year. 90 manholes were test baited, of which 4 were found to be infested. 15 manholes were baited during the two treatments. 2 were found to be infested during the winter treatment and 4 during the summer treatment. The treatments were followed by a check of house drainage systems in infested areas, although I must report that infestation in sewers has declined considerably over the past few years and the value of regular and systematic treatments has been clearly indicated.

Council Properties:

Careful supervision of the Council's Depots and Stores was maintained during the year and any infestation at the Sewage Works or Refuse Tip was dealt with by the Manager and Rodent Operative. Improvements in the method of operating the refuse tip have assisted considerably in checking rodent infestations.

Wasps' Nests:

34 complaints were received of wasps' nests and these were treated by the Rodent Operative.

CONTROL OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES.

Meat Supply and Slaughtering facilities.

No slaughterhouses within the Urban District were licensed during the year, but satisfactory slaughtering facilities for the area were available at the former Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse at Sandridge, in the St. Albans Rural District. Since de-control of slaughtering, however, some of the meat supply for the area has come from other sources and a careful check was therefore kept on the vehicles used for transporting the meat together with the protective clothing worn by the personnel.

Arrangements are still in force whereby assistance in meat inspection duties would be given to the St. Albans Rural District Council should the necessity arise at any time.

The following meat and meat products were condemned as being unfit for human consumption at premises in Harpenden during the year:

Beef	..	..	14 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Tinned Meat and Meat Products	..	..	37 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs

Other Food Inspection.

The following foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption, and disposal by incineration or burying on the refuse tip was arranged in every case:

Fruit (other than tinned)	..	35 lbs
Tinned Fruit	..	118 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Tinned Vegetables)	..	32 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Soups and Fish)	..	
Tinned Milk and Cream	..	4 tins
Preserves	..	2 lbs

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The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

During the year 302 visits were made to food premises in the area and inspections were carried out under the above Regulations. No certificates of exemption were issued and all improvements were secured without the need for formal action by the Council. The Regulations appear to have been accepted by food traders as being reasonable in their requirements and at the same time essential in any food business.

Food Premises.

There are 140 food premises in the area which are made up as follows:

General Stores and Grocers	..	37
Cafes and Canteens	..	25
Confectioners and Bakers	..	25
Greengrocers	..	8
Butchers	..	11
Licensed Premises	..	25
Chemists	..	6
Fish Shops	..	3

12 premises are registered for the manufacture and sale of sausages etc. and 35 visits were made to these premises. Conditions were generally found to be satisfactory.

Legal Proceedings.

In two instances legal proceedings were instituted under Section 2 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, where articles of food were sold not of the substance demanded by the purchaser. The first case concerned a loaf of bread containing a piece of wire, and the second a loaf of bread contaminated with lubricating grease. Fines of £5 were imposed in both cases together with costs.

Ice-cream.

There are in the district 45 premises registered for the sale or storage of ice-cream under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, and in each case the ice-cream is obtained from one of the well known large manufacturers. Practically all the ice-cream sold from these premises is pre-packed. No premises are registered for the manufacture of ice-cream.

A number of vehicles from which ice-cream is sold move into the district from neighbouring towns and at present the effective control of the sale of ice-cream from such vehicles is exceedingly difficult since they invariably operate at week-ends and holidays.

20 visits were made to premises registered for the storage and sale of ice-cream and 16 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Luton for examination, the results being set out below:

<u>Type of Sample.</u>	<u>Grade.</u>				<u>Total.</u>
	<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	
Pre-packed ..	6	1	-	1	8
Loose ..	3	2	3	-	8
					<u>16</u>
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N.B. Samples in Grades 1 and 2 are considered satisfactory.

When unsatisfactory samples were obtained, further samples were procured and thorough investigations carried out in each instance, which included contacting other local authorities in whose areas the ice-cream was manufactured.

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Milk and Dairies Acts, Orders and Regulations.

There are in the district 12 registered distributors of milk and three registered dairies, although no milk is actually pasteurised in Harpenden. Such milk is supplied from three large processing plants in adjoining areas and all samples of this milk submitted for testing proved satisfactory.

The following licences were issued during the year:

Dealers' licences authorising the use of
the special designation.

Pasteurised	..	..	5
Sterilised	..	..	6
Tuberculin Tested	..		4

Supplementary licences authorising the use
of the special designation.

Pasteurised	..	..	2
Sterilised	..	..	2
Tuberculin Tested	..		2

Details of the milk samples are given below:

<u>Type of Milk</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>examined</u>	<u>Satis-</u> <u>factory</u>	<u>Unsatis-</u> <u>factory</u>
Sterilised	1	1	-
Pasteurised	34	34	-
T.T. (Farm Bottled)	22	20	2
T.T. (Pasteurised)	23	23	-
—	—	—	—
	80	78	2
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Rent Act, 1957.

This Act came into operation on the 6th July 1957, and amongst its important provisions it enabled landlords of private property rated at £30 or below to increase rents to a figure not exceeding twice the gross value of the property. Where, however, a house is in need of repair a tenant can prevent a rent increase by applying to the Local Authority for a Certificate of Disrepair providing the tenant has first sent details of the necessary repairs, on the appropriate form, to the landlord.

By the end of the year only nine tenants had applied for Certificates of Disrepair and it can be assumed that many tenants reached agreement with their landlords over repairs, this being one of the results which it was hoped would be achieved when the Act came into force.

A summary of the applications received for Certificates of Disrepair is as follows:

<u>Applications</u> <u>received.</u>	<u>Notices</u> <u>by</u> <u>Local Authority</u> <u>to Landlords.</u>	<u>Applications</u> <u>refused.</u>	<u>Under-</u> <u>takings</u> <u>received.</u>	<u>Certificates</u> <u>of Disrepair</u> <u>issued.</u>
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<u>Form</u> <u>I.</u>	<u>Form</u> <u>J.</u>		<u>Form</u> <u>K.</u>	<u>Form</u> <u>L.</u>
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9	7	2	4	3
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HOUSING MANAGEMENT.

The Council now owns 653 houses, 190 flats, and 25 prefabricated bungalows, making a total of 868 housing units.

It is gratifying to report that by the end of October, the last tenant in the emergency huttred encampment at Milford Estate was rehoused. The Council had been aware for some time of the deteriorating condition of these huts and the promise that no tenant would spend another winter in the camp was fulfilled. It must, however, be remembered that many tenants of Milford Estate had very limited claims on the Council for housing accommodation and to have housed these tenants in permanent houses indiscriminately would have prejudiced the position of other persons on the waiting list. Since the camp was converted into living accommodation, 188 families were housed there and its value in providing temporary shelter cannot therefore be over emphasised.

During the year, the following visits and inspections were made in the performance of the duties of housing management:

To applicants	..	72
Maintenance	..	1,837
Administration	..	216
Tenancies	..	173

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Summary of Housing Applicants.

<u>Applicants.</u>	<u>Active List.</u>	<u>Deferred List.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Married couples with children	42	54	96
Married couples and Engaged couples	53	47	100
Single persons	7	5	12
Old persons	115	-	115
	217	106	323

The total number of applicants for housing accommodation at the end of the year - 323, compares with 319 at the 31st of December 1957, 303 at the end of 1956, and 336 at the end of 1955.

The number of applications from old people rose from 89 in the previous year to 115 by the end of 1958. This to some extent was caused by the provisions of the Rent Act, 1957, where tenants of private houses received notice to quit and it is significant that the majority of the persons affected were old people. However, by the end of the year, it was only necessary to re-house two tenants who were affected by the provisions of the Rent Act.

Although the total number of applicants on the housing list still tops the 300 mark, urgent cases of overcrowding and applicants living in insanitary conditions are becoming less and

less. Many young couples with or without children living with the parents of either the applicant or his wife still look to the Council for accommodation, presumably because high interest rates and building costs still put house purchase beyond their reach. There is, however, a great demand for the purchase of Council houses in view of the favourable terms offered by the Council and since the scheme was introduced 52 houses have been sold, 13 of these during 1958. In addition, 53 applicants who are all tenants of houses which are not for sale are waiting for suitable vacancies to occur on other estates so that they may purchase a house as the opportunity arises.

24 new flats were completed and occupied during the year. In addition, however, another 23 applicants were re-housed in existing houses or flats which became vacant. 5 mutual exchanges were arranged between tenants of other local authorities and 39 transfers were also agreed during the year.

All housing accommodation is allocated strictly in accordance with the Council's points scheme. Applicants are required to have a 5-year residential qualification within the Harpenden Urban District and no application is considered until it has been deposited for 12 months.

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PETROLEUM REGULATIONS.

The provisions of the Petroleum Acts and Regulations are administered by the Department. 28 occupiers of filling stations, repair garages and other premises are licensed to store petroleum spirit and 67 visits were made to such premises during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. SNOWDON,

Senior Public Health
Inspector.

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